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THE KO`OLAU NEWS
The Many Voices of Windward O`ahu
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TO: David Rosenbrock, *Project Manager*
Wayne K. Minami, *Chair*
2001 Reapportionment Commission

As a Windward O`ahu resident who is also the editor and co-publisher of The Ko`olau News, an on-line newspaper distributed seven days a week, I regularly attend about 70 meetings activities, and events each month here in Windward O`ahu. My husband covers another 20 or so. Although anything published on the Internet is accessible to anyone anywhere at anytime, our focus is on the area between Makapu`u Point and Kawela Bay.

It had not been my intention to speak at the July 19, 2001, **Reapportionment Commission** meeting, but, given your abbreviated timeline, I felt that I had to register my strong objections to any attempt to split Windward O`ahu into two Congressional Districts. Although I was aware of the **North-South Proposal**, I did not know about the **Mink Plan** until today. That means two of the three plans you're considering would carve the region into two Districts.

Based upon my experiences in getting to know these communities all up and down the Windward side, it is clear that there is a strong sense of history & culture in Windward O`ahu which extends back over 1,000 years. There are shared values concerning a wide range of issues. We would be far better served by staying together.

Furthermore, I believe that the two plans do not address the concept of *Environmental Justice* which is a requirement for all issues of concern to the Federal Government.

The following is taken from an **R. M. Towill Corporation** study for the **O`ahu Metropolitan Planning Organization** as it develops long-term transportation policies.

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 states that: "No person in the United States shall, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial Assistance." **Title VI** bars intentional discrimination as well as disparate impact discrimination (i.e., a neutral policy or practice that has a disparate impact on protected groups.

The Environmental Justice Order, signed by President Clinton in February, 1994, (Executive Order 12898) amplified **Title VI** by providing that "each Federal agency shall make achieving environmental justice part of its mission by identifying and addressing, as appropriate, disproportionately high and adverse human health and environmental effects of its programs, policies and activities on minority and low-income populations."

Note that Executive Order 12898 is for all federal agencies and programs and not just

transportation issues. It seems to me that having a strong sense of where the low-income and minority residents are located should be considered in determining how the Congressional Districts will eventually be created. It is not enough to just count noses.

Thank you for providing me with the opportunity to speak to the ***Reapportionment Commission*** at its July 19, 2001, meeting.

Shannon Wood, *Editor & co-Publisher*
The Ko'olau News